

# THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

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*"I support and uphold the President of this Church and those who are in authority under him. I can bear testimony that their motives are pure and unsullied."*—ANTOINE R. IVINS.

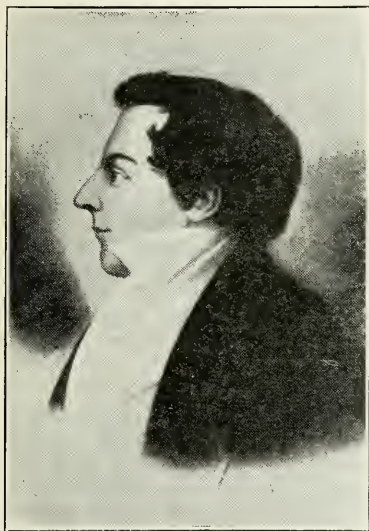
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## LAW OF THE TITHE

Behold, now it is called to-day until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming. . . . Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind. (Doc. & Cov. 64: 23, 33.)

## THE PROPHET'S COVENANT WITH THE LORD

PERHAPS one of the most striking statements on tithing by the Prophet, showing his attitude in the matter, is the covenant he and Oliver Cowdery made with the Lord, in November, 1834. Joseph Smith says:

"After giving thanks for the relief which the Lord had lately sent us by opening the hearts of the brethren from the east; after commencing and rejoicing before the Lord on this occasion, we agreed to enter into the following covenant with the Lord, viz.:

"That if the Lord will prosper us in our business and open the way before us that we may obtain means to pay our debts, that we be not troubled nor brought into disrepute before the world, nor His people; after that, of all that He shall give unto us, we will give a tenth to be bestowed upon the poor in His Church, or as He shall command; and that we will be faithful over that which He has entrusted to our care, that we may obtain much; and that our children after us shall remember to observe this sacred and holy covenant, and that our children and our children's children may know of the same, we have subscribed our names with our own hands."

## WHEN THE TEST COMES

ELDER MANSEL H. NELSON

JOHN RICHARDS stood on the corner wondering which way to go. There had been a mighty fight going on within him ever since he had left home, as to which way he would turn when he reached that corner, and it didn't seem any nearer settled now than it had been when he started. One way led to the grocery store, the other to the Bishop's office.

Again he looked at the money that he held in his hand. This five dollar bill he had been saving to pay as tithing. The money really did belong to the Lord, but it was all that stood between him and starvation.

His thoughts raced back to his loved ones, and to the humble little home that he had tried to provide for them. He remembered about Mary saying that there was only enough flour left for one more batch of bread, and that they had scarcely anything else in the house to eat. He was also reminded that he had been a mighty poor provider for the last few months, and that Mary and the two small children had not had what they really needed to eat lately, and that they were wearing clothes that were almost entirely covered with patches. Each thought came before him as a ghastly, haunting mockery of the fact that he had always paid his tithing, and yet what were the results? He had failed to find work, and it seemed that everything had turned against him the last few months. Just the other day Mary had told him that she was going back to her parents unless things took a change. They would help her until she could find work, she had said.

Then his thoughts ran on back to the time when her father and mother had advised her to wait awhile before getting married, until he could provide a better home and have a more certain income. But they had been young and foolish then, and had married—and now she was losing confidence in him—thinking of going back to her parents who had already made very severe remarks as to his failure to provide for her.

For several minutes he hesitated. The fight raged within him. One voice seemed to cry out for mercy for his family. Another voice kept saying: "That money is the Lord's, pay it to Him and He will bless you with more."

Still he hesitated! He tried to reason what was best to do. He knew that it was right for him to pay that money for tithing—but his babies were hungry! What could he do? He might pay his tithing and then go and ask for credit at the store—but he could not run a bill and not know how he could ever pay it.

Finally with a decisive shrug of his shoulders he turned toward the grocery store.

That still small voice seemed to follow him. "Pay your tithing and you shall be blessed. Pay your tithing and you shall be blessed with more money," it seemed to say over and over again.

He had almost reached the grocery store when overcome again by the fight that had been going on within his soul; he stopped again. For another two minutes he stood debating what he should do.

Again all the haunting memories of the last few months came back to him. His imagination painted for him how lonely he would be without Mary and the kiddies. There wouldn't be much left in life if they were gone. Mary had always been such a true and loving pal. She had certainly done her part to make a happy home for them. There was some mystery about her going back on him at this time, too. She had never appeared to be that kind of a girl before the last few weeks. She had always seemed to care for him very much, and he loved her as he did his own life—but one couldn't live on love alone. He didn't blame her much for wanting to go back and live in luxury, when now at best she could only have a very humble home and very simple living.

Again he looked at the money. It would buy groceries for several days supply, and perhaps by that time he could find a few days work somewhere. And yet, how was he going to find work without God's help? And if he didn't pay his tithing maybe God wouldn't help him. Would He help him if he did pay his tithing?

That was the question! Would God help him find work if he did pay his tithing?

Suddenly he remembered something that one of the Apostles had said in the last conference: "If you don't believe that the Lord will do what He says He will do, try Him once and see for yourself. That is the way to find out."

"I'll do it!" he exclaimed, and with a firm determination to "see for himself" he turned around and went to the Bishop's office.

"I have come to pay some tithing that I have been saving for quite a long time," he said, as he laid the money on the Bishop's desk.

"That is good," said the Bishop. "I wish that all the members of our Church were as good tithe-payers as you are."

"Well, I always try to pay my tithing," John mumbled. Again he was thinking of his loved ones, and how badly they needed food and clothes that very minute. He realized that if he would tell his troubles to the Bishop that he would get help at once. But his pride rebelled. He simply could not ask for charity.

"Have you had any work lately, John?" asked the Bishop as he handed him the receipt.

"No, I haven't. Not for quite awhile. That is money I had laid aside for tithing some time ago, and had just neglected to bring it in," he explained.

"Is there anything that I can do for you, John?"

"Not unless you can tell me where I can get a job," John replied.

"I can't right now, but I will remember you. If I hear of anything I'll let you know right away."

"I'd appreciate it if you would, Bishop. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, John. I am sure that something will turn up pretty soon, because the Lord has promised to bless those who obey the law of tithing; and if anybody ever did pay an honest tithe, I am sure that you do, John. So cheer up, old man, everything will turn out all right."

It was with a lighter heart, and a more hopeful spirit that John turned toward home. He was glad that he had paid his tithing.

On his way home the Bishop's words kept repeating in his mind. He would tell Mary what the Bishop had said, and he was sure that it would cheer her up a little. He felt also that to-morrow he was sure to find work.

But as he neared his little home a sense of depression came over him. He wondered if Mary would still be there. He wondered if something had happened to one of the children. There was something wrong—that he knew without a doubt.

The last block he almost ran. He hurried up the walk and into the house. Nobody was in sight. Through room after room he ran, and then out into the back yard—but all in vain.

As he re-entered the house he noticed a piece of paper fall from the table, and immediately picked it up. These are the words that he read:

JOHN:

Father came by this afternoon, so I am going back with him. I am very sorry, but I just can't stand this any longer.

MARY.

John rubbed his eyes and read it again. Not even a trace of love. No mention of ever coming back. Not a word of hope did it leave for him.

John stood as a man in a dream. Then it really had happened! He staggered to the front door and looked out, hopelessly. He turned and dropped into a chair, and there for the first time since he was a child John Richards' whole soul was shaken with bitter sobs.

Hour after hour John sat there with his head buried in his hands. Bent with sorrow, and broken with grief, he seemed to have no sense of the passing time. He could have been paralyzed for all the movement that he made. After a while, when he did finally raise his head, the clock on the mantel had long since struck two.

He dragged himself from the chair into the lonely bedroom, and dropped down on the bed without undressing. He lay there thinking—worrying—wondering. What was Mary doing? Were the babies all right? Was she really safe and sound in her father's home, or had she gone off somewhere else? Could he ever bring her back to him?

And then again he thought of what the Bishop had said. After all, things might not be nearly *so* bad as they appeared to be on the surface. Mary would probably be back in the morning, and feel much better after her visit. And maybe to-morrow he could find work. He felt sure that something would turn up to-morrow.

But just as he was about to become reconciled to the fact that everything was going to be all right when morning came, doubt began to creep into his mind. It seemed to spread through his soul like a slow, deadly poison. At first he paid little attention to it; but as he sat thinking, trying to reason things out, the evil seemed to grow. The longer he thought the more it grew, until there was scarcely anything left except doubt.

He began to figure how much money he had paid for tithing. It amounted to several hundred dollars since he had been married. Enough, if he had it all back now, so that Mary would have had no cause for leaving.

"Just think," a silent voice of doubt was saying, "out of every

thousand dollars that you have made you have given one hundred dollars away. One hundred dollars is a lot of money. You have given away many hundred dollars, and what have you received in return for it? Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Why, if you had all the money back that you have thrown away like that, just think what you could do with it right now! There would be clothes for the children, and for Mary, plenty of food in the house, and a nice fat purse to go on. But as it is, you have nothing. Even those who have loved you so dearly have turned against you."

He groaned as he arose and started to walk back and forth across the floor, as some wild animal that had suddenly found himself trapped in his own den.

As he continued to pace the floor his mind became dulled with agony, and he began to count the pictures on the wall, the number of steps across the room, the boards in the floor. Occasionally he would change the routine by pausing to stare out of the window, as a doomed man watching for the light to come on the day of his execution.

When morning finally did come, John washed his face and hands, and then started out to look for work. He had several repair jobs promised, but every one seemed to be without money just at the time and so put him off. He even offered to work for less, but it was all in vain; it seemed as if carpenters were just out of luck. No one could afford to have any building done. Not a job was to be found.

All day long he went from one prospective place to another, but no work was in sight. It was very discouraging indeed.

That night he returned to his deserted home, tired, exhausted, and broken in spirit and soul.

He sat down in his favourite chair to rest. He missed Mary more than ever. He remembered how hard she worked all day, and then when he came home tired she would always welcome him with a good meal. Always the house would be found spotlessly clean. After the dishes had been cleared away she would come and read to him. Many good articles and stories they had enjoyed together. The harder he worked, the more he enjoyed her sweet, low voice, painting the beautiful word pictures from a magazine or book.

To-night he was wondering just why he had not taken her to the Temple to be sealed to him forever. Perhaps if they had been married in the Temple, things wouldn't have turned out as they had done.

He finally decided to call and see if Mary was at her parents, and was all right.

"515," he called.

"Hello, this is Mrs. Carter speaking," came the prompt reply.

"This is John," he explained. "I just called to see if Mary is all right."

"Yes, she is all right. She is staying with us for a while. She will at least have what she needs to eat here," she said, and jammed the receiver back into place.

John was not only hurt, but he was angry. "She didn't have to be so darned mean about it, anyway," he muttered to himself.

Nevertheless it was some satisfaction to know that Mary was there with her parents and was comfortable; even if they did

hate him. They were very selfish parents, he often thought. In the first place, her father had not only been opposed to her marrying John, but also to her joining the Church. Her father had never forgiven John, while her mother had been only a little more friendly toward him. They had always had plenty of money, and Mary being their only child was unprepared for the life that she had found with John.

All night long John sat with his head resting in his hands and suffered with shame, pain, and doubt.

The whole night through, the fight continued to rage within his soul. Two great powers seemed to be trying to tear him into pieces. One voice seemed to laugh at him in mockery for paying his last cent for a worthless donation, while the other power seemed to be saying: "You must pray. You must pray."

At last he fell upon his knees before the Lord and cried for help. He asked God to give him faith to bear the trials that had come upon him, to forgive him for his doubt, and to help him win Mary's love back.

After a half hour spent in prayer, he arose and went to bed with a spirit of relief and comfort within his soul, and soon fell into a deep sleep.

He was awakened by the ringing of the telephone. When he jumped out of bed the sun was streaming in through the window, and he knew that he had slept very late.

"Hello," he said, taking down the receiver.

"Hello," came the voice of a woman, "is this Mr. John Richards speaking?"

"Yes," he answered, with a little disappointment, for he had hoped that it was Mary calling to say that she was coming home to him.

"The County Attorney wants to see you here at his office as soon as possible."

"I'll be right down," he answered.

"I wonder if it is the County Attorney that wants to see me, or if it is the Bishop," John was saying to himself as he slipped on his clothes, and washed his face and hands. "Well, it won't take very long to find out, as long as they are one and the same man," he concluded, as he closed the front door.

When he arrived at the office, the County Attorney was waiting for him.

He turned to his secretary and said: "You may be excused until I call, and please tell any one that comes to see me that I am busy."

"Sit down, John," he said kindly. "I have some news for you."

"What is it?" John inquired anxiously. "I'll just take it standing, if you please."

"Well, it isn't much to stand for, John. I just ran onto a little work that I thought perhaps you would be interested in. It certainly isn't much, but I thought that if you were out of work it would be better than nothing."

"Yes, I should say," John answered with growing astonishment.

Why did he tell his secretary to not let anybody come in here for, if that was what he was going to tell him?

"This isn't very much of a job for a man that usually works for seven or eight dollars a day; but it will keep a man alive at

least. And if you want to, you could do your work and do this on the side," the Bishop continued. "It is just a job of janitor work that pays only seventy-five dollars a month. It would probably take you about three or four hours a day, morning and night together, to do the work."

"Why, that would be as much per hour as I usually work for," John replied. "And a lot more per month than I have been making the last few months. I would be glad to get that job. But isn't it a little high pay for janitor work? It seems to me that they could get somebody for less than that now-a-days."

"Yes, I suppose that they could. But Mr. Simmons said that he was willing to pay twenty-five dollars a month more to get some one who was honest and trustworthy. He asked me if I knew of some one that was a full tithe-payer that he could get to do the work. He made the statement that a man who would be honest with his God would be honest with his fellowman."

"What do you know about that!" John exclaimed with surprise. "I thought that he hated the 'Mormons'?"

"He isn't as bad as he likes to make people think sometimes. You see, I have had a good many talks about the Gospel with him myself; and I tell you that he isn't as dumb as you might think. I believe that he would join the Church in a minute if he wasn't afraid of what people would think after all the mean things that he has said about us."

"I am glad to hear that, as well as surprised," John said, "and I will be glad to get that job. I do surely appreciate your trouble too, Bishop. It is mighty good to have a friend that will give you a lift once in a while."

He started to go when the Bishop put his hand gently on his shoulder, and said in a kind, fatherly voice: "What is the trouble, John? Can't I help you?"

John hesitated for several seconds, debating whether to tell him about Mary or keep it a secret, then he answered: "You have helped me more than words can express."

"But there is something else, something that has happened since you were here the other day. Won't you let me help you, John?" he asked again.

John told him all that had happened. How he had tried so hard to maintain a comfortable home, how he had failed to find work, and how Mary had left him. He also told him about the fight that he had experienced in regard to tithing.

The good Bishop sat in silence until he had finished his story, and then he said with a deep, tender voice:

"John, I have always thought a lot of you. I don't know whether it is because you have worked so long with me in the Church or something else.

"Brother Beach is going away next week, and I have been wondering if you would like to take his place in the Bishopric. We need a young man in there with us. We are both getting old, and we have been there for a long time. You have been a faithful worker in the Church with me ever since you were a deacon, and have been a great joy to me in this work. Will you accept this office?"

"Gladly, Bishop," he answered, choking back a tear.

*(Continued on page 378)*

THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1933

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EDITORIAL

THE VOICE OF THE PROPHETS

THE month of June is devoted to the subject of tithing in all the missions. Well worked out programmes have undoubtedly been placed in the hands of Branch Presidents, with suggestions as to the most appropriate way in which to stress the value of keeping this commandment. Not only in the Sacrament meetings, but also in the sessions of the Priesthood and auxiliaries should the principle of tithing be explained, together with the blessings that are promised by the Lord to those who honestly observe this law.

Every President of the Church, men whom we sustain as prophets, seers and revelators, have left on record their testimony as to the divinity of the law on tithing and the necessity of the saints living it worthily. On the front page of this issue of the *Star* will be found the covenant entered into with the Lord by the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, that they would faithfully observe this commandment. We now publish what the succeeding Prophets of the Lord have said to His people :

PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG : One thing is required at the hands of this people, and to understand which, there is no necessity for receiving a commandment every year, viz., to pay their tithing. I do not suppose for a moment that there is a person in this Church who is unacquainted with the duty of paying tithing, neither is it necessary to have revelation every year upon the subject. There is the law—pay one-tenth. . . .

Every part and particle of my system, from the top of my head to the soles of my feet, has been produced by my Father in Heaven ; and He requires one-tenth part of my brain, heart, nerve, muscle, sinew, flesh, bone, and of my whole system, for the building of temples, for the ministry, for sustaining missionaries and missionaries' families, for feeding the poor, the aged, the halt and blind, and for gathering them home from the nations and taking care of them after they are gathered. He has said, " My son, devote one-tenth of yourself to the good and wholesome work of taking care of your fellow beings, preaching the Gospel, bringing people into the kingdom ; lay your plans to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves ; direct the labours of those who are able to labour ; and one-tenth part is all-sufficient if it is devoted properly, carefully and judiciously for the advancement of My kingdom on the earth."

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR : I am desirous to see the people observe the law of tithing, because it is a plain and direct command to us. Not that I care anything personally whether people pay their tithing or not, and I do not think the Lord cares much Himself. The gold and silver are His, and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills ; and to Him belongs power to command all things. And what we do possess of this world's



goods is given unto us to make a wise use of, because we cannot take them with us when we shall be called hence. It is for us, as saints of the Most High, to be honest and upright and take a correct course, to be full of integrity and maintain correct principles everywhere and at all times. It is not a matter of pecuniary interest that prompts me to speak to you. It is a test of faith which God has given unto us, and which affects us all, and that, for some reason known to God. But speaking of ourselves, it is positively stated, as before referred to, that those who do not observe this law shall not be considered worthy to abide among us; and further, that this shall be a standing law unto all the Stakes of Zion.

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PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF: Some of the people have looked upon the law of tithing as a kind of tax and burden laid upon them, but who is it for? Our tithing, our labour, and all that we do in the Kingdom of God, who is it for?

The tithing is not to exalt the Lord, or to feed or clothe Him. He has had His endowments long ago; it is thousands and millions of years since He received His blessings, and if He had not received them, we could not give them to Him, for He is far in advance of us.

I want the brethren to understand this one thing, that our tithing, our labour, our works are not for the exaltation of the Almighty, but they are for us. Not but what the Lord is pleased to see us obey His commandments, because by doing this it will place us in a position that will fulfill and accomplish the object of our creation and bring about the end designed by our coming to take tabernacles here in the flesh. Again, when we do wrong, the Lord knows we shall inherit sorrow and misery if we continue in that wrong. Then I say, brethren, let us understand this as it is, and we shall do well. In paying our tithing, in obeying every law that is given to exalt us and to do us good, it is all for our individual benefit and the benefit of our children, and it is not of any particular benefit to the Lord, only as He is pleased in the faithfulness of His children and desires to see them walk in the path which leads to salvation and eternal life.

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PRESIDENT LORENZO SNOW: As I have said more than once, I know that the Lord will forgive the Latter-day Saints for their past negligence in paying tithing, if they will now repent and pay a conscientious tithing, from this time on. But it would be woeful to think of the results if the Latter-day Saints fail to listen to the voice of the servants of the Lord.

It is God's truth that the time has now come when He will not look favourably upon our negligence of this principle. I plead with you in the name of the Lord, and I pray that every man, woman and child who has means shall pay one-tenth of their income as a tithing. I beseech you to do this, for the time has now come when the Lord is prepared to bestow upon us the choicest blessings. Our enemies are upon our path, and will, if possible, make us trouble. If we are unfaithful in this matter the same results will follow us as followed the people in Jackson county.

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PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH: The law of tithing is a test by which the people as individuals shall be proved. Any man who fails to observe this principle shall be known as a man who is indifferent to the welfare of Zion, who neglects his duty as a member of the Church and who does nothing toward the accomplishment of the temporal advancement of the kingdom of God. He contributes nothing, either, towards spreading the Gospel to the nations of the earth, and he neglects to do that which

would entitle him to receive the blessings and ordinances of the Gospel. . . .

The purpose of the law of tithing is similar to that of the law of revenue which is enacted by every state, every country, and every municipality in the world, I suppose. There is no such thing as an organization of men for any purpose of importance, without provisions for carrying out its designs. The law of tithing is the law of revenue for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Without it, it would be impossible to carry on the purposes of the Lord.

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PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT: The law of financial prosperity to the Latter-day Saints, under covenant with God, is to be an honest tithepayer, and not to rob the Lord in tithes and offerings. Prosperity comes to those who observe the law of tithing; and when I say prosperity I am not thinking of it in terms of dollars and cents alone, although as a rule the Latter-day Saints who are the best tithepayers are the most prosperous men, financially; but what I count as real prosperity, as the one thing of all others that is of greatest value to every man and woman living, is the growth in a knowledge of God, and in a testimony, and in the power to live the Gospel and to inspire our families to do the same. That is prosperity of the truest kind. I would rather die in poverty, knowing that my family could testify that, to the best of the ability with which God had endowed me, I had observed His laws and kept His commandments, and by my example had proclaimed the Gospel, than to have all the wealth of the world.

JAMES H. WALLIS

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## WHEN THE TEST COMES

*(Concluded from page 375)*

But he was wondering why the Bishop hadn't said anything about his trouble before he mentioned that. He was sure that he meant to tell him something about it, or he would have never asked him about it.

"Mr. and Mrs. Carter came in this morning with Mary," he said, as if reading John's thoughts. "They were asking my advice about getting a divorce. That is, the old folks were. Mary just said that she thought it was the best thing that she could do under the circumstances.

"We talked for some time. They explained how Mary had been mistreated, how she and the babies had been starved, and so on. Mary didn't say much; Mr. Carter did most of the speaking.

"When they had finished I asked to speak to Mr. Carter alone, and after talking for a few minutes, he admitted that he was hoping that Mary would fall in love with a certain man that he thought a great deal of, and who had plenty of money. It seemed that the man had already taken an interest in her, but of course she knew nothing about that part of it.

"And then I talked to Mary. I found that Mary isn't responsible for this trouble, but very foolish parents.

"Go and get her, John; and take her to the Temple and marry her right," he said in that deep, kind voice that had thrilled many a court room. "She is worth too much to lose."

John tried to speak, but could not say a word.

The good Bishop gave him a sealed envelope on which was written: "Do not ask questions of me now."

John stumbled out of the office, and down the road towards home. As he came nearer he could see the smoke curling up from the chimney, and knew that Mary had come home.

When he entered the house the odour of good things cooking came to him. Overcome by hunger and exhaustion he would have fallen if Mary hadn't caught him and led him to the bed.

It was some time after that, and after much forgiving and thankfulness, that John thought of the letter which the Bishop had given him.

Inside was a letter, and another sealed envelope.

The letter read:

DEAR JOHN:

Please forgive me for taking things in my own hands, but you see that I knew Mary would be home before you, and that she would like to have something good to eat when you returned, so I went to the store and had a few things sent out that I was sure that you needed, and told the delivery man to leave them on the porch, and if he saw Mary to tell her that you sent them out.

These things are charged to you at the store, because I thought that you would rather have it that way.

R. S. STEAL.

On the other envelope was written:

A wedding present, with best wishes from your Bishop.

Inside was a recommend for them to go to the Temple for marriage, and three twenty-dollar bills.

A few weeks later John returned home one evening to find Mr. and Mrs. Carter waiting there for him. They had come to apologize for the wrong they had done.

"And what do you know about it, dear," Mary said happily, "They are going to be baptized Saturday."

"And we want to go through the Temple and be married all over again, like you did, just as soon as we can," Mr. Carter explained proudly. "I think that is the most wonderful thing that I ever heard of. I have just been wondering what has been the matter with me all these years."

"And you might just as well know that all this came about because you paid that last five dollars tithing, John," put in Mrs. Carter. "It must have taken a lot of faith to give your last cent to the Lord when your family was on the verge of starvation. That was the thing that started us investigating the Gospel."

Through John Richards' mind ran the words, "If you don't believe that the Lord will do just what He says He will do, try Him once, and see for yourself. That is the way to find out."—*Relief Society Magazine*, November, 1932.

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GOD intends faith and the power of the Priesthood to intervene for the protection of the saints, when the scourges and calamities incident to the second coming of Christ shall begin. The Priesthood shall shield those who bear it, and those who honour its possessors.—ORSON F. WHITNEY.

## WHY CALL THEM "MORMONS" ?

(WE take pleasure in reprinting for the *MILLENNIAL STAR* readers, an article which appeared in the May 20th issue of the *Birmingham Weekly Post*, written by Harold J. Shepstone, F.R.G.S. In the main, the account is true and accurate; an uncoloured account of a visit to Salt Lake City by an unbiased observer.—EDITOR.)

I have spent ten days wandering about Salt Lake City, the home of the "Mormons" and the Zion of the Latter-day Saints. I made a special point of visiting every shrine and site associated with "Mormon" history and tradition. I was courteously received by the officials of the "Mormon" Church, learned something of their beliefs, and chatted with the leading business men of the city.

Always I was puzzled; for there was nothing to distinguish a "Mormon" from a Gentile, as the non-"Mormon" population are termed. And to-day the Gentiles outnumber the "Mormons" in their own city. Of its 150,000 inhabitants only some 40 per cent. recognize the "Mormon" Church. The remaining sixty per cent. live their own lives and are free to attend any church they wish, and they certainly have a wide choice, no less than eighteen different religious denominations being represented—Roman Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Presbyterian, Christian Scientist, etc.

But they are not referred to as Catholics, Methodists, or Baptists, for the simple reason that you do not know to which church they belong. It is the same with the "Mormon" population. There is nothing to distinguish them, not even some little mark in the way they dress, or in their manner or behaviour. They live ordinary lives like their non-"Mormon" brethren. Like them they obey the same laws and submit to the same regulations. "Mormon" women favour the latest Paris fashions in dress, and young "Mormon" girls resort to the beauty parlour just as the modern girl does in all the big cities.

Those who picture the followers of the Prophet Joseph Smith as going about with long faces, dressed in sombre clothes, and looking askance upon everyone who is not of their faith, are destined to receive a shock—at least, in Salt Lake City. The "Mormons" are hospitable, open, free and jolly people, as fond of life as anyone else. They indulge in sport and recreation, visit the theatre and cinema, and talk about the latest happenings just as we do at home. If, too, you secretly surmise that there are still "Mormons" with more than one wife you are making a fatal error. Polygamy among them is as dead as the dodo. True, the old saints did resort to this patriarchal marriage system of the ancients, but that has long been given up, and any "Mormon" who breaks the law is liable to excommunication. Nor have they hesitated to put this rule into force. The argument that if the "Mormons" suddenly found themselves subjected to no civilised laws they would again resort to polygamy is all moonshine, for the simple reason that their women would not have it. A "Mormon" wife is mistress and head of her own household.

Then Salt Lake City is admitted to be the best planned city in the whole of America, an open town, catering to every class and taste, where you can express yourself freely on any subject without fear or hesitation. It lies in a beautiful valley amid a

forest of trees, and is surrounded by picturesque mountains, many of them snow-capped, and possessing an ideal climate. It is difficult to realise that this modern metropolis stands on what eighty-five years ago was a parched wilderness, uninhabited save by hardy jack-rabbits. When Brigham Young and the advance guard of the pioneers entered the valley on July 24th, 1847, there was only one tree, a stunted cedar, visible. The stump of this tree, entwined with vines, is still preserved. It required vision, reinforced with courage, to say, in the midst of that desolation: "This is the place! Here we will build our city, and rear our temple!"

Brigham Young laid out the city in squares, or blocks, of ten acres each, with streets 132 feet across from kerb to kerb, and pavements 25 feet in width; hence Salt Lake City is the only American town to-day that has ample room for modern motor traffic. Except in the business section, all the streets are lined with trees, affording ideal shelter from the rays of the sun in the summer months. These trees, together with the well-kept lawns and gardens that front the dwellings of its citizens, give the city a park-like appearance. Indeed, seen from the surrounding mountains, or from the roofs of the tall buildings, the residential sections appear to be buried in a wood.

On hot and dusty days the authorities resort to an excellent method of cleansing the gutters, which are wide and deep. At intervals they are flooded with clear water turned on from the street standards. Sanitary experts have pronounced this system of flooding the kerbs as most beneficial in purifying and cleansing the air. Then at almost every street corner there are fountains bubbling over with the purest cold drinking water.

Salt Lake City is far from being a dull or solemn place. I found it much livelier than many cities in the Eastern States. In the old Salt Lake City Theatre, which dates back to the days of Brigham Young, a modern revue from Paris was being given, a type of performance which would have shocked many of our Puritan forefathers. Yet I noticed it received favourable comment in the *Deseret News*, which is the recognized organ of the "Mormon" Church. The city also has two vaudeville houses, fourteen cinemas, as well as dance halls, recreation grounds and a splendid park, not to mention four fine golf courses all within the city limits.

The city's most novel attraction to the visitor is the Temple Block, a ten-acre plot, where we find the Temple, Tabernacle, and Assembly Hall, set in a beautiful garden adorned with monuments and statues. The Assembly Hall is a pretty Gothic structure, used for public lectures on non-sectarian subjects. The Tabernacle is an architectural curio, without a counterpart anywhere. It has the appearance of a colossal egg-shell, cut in half, and set down lengthwise. It is famed for its wonderful acoustic qualities—for the slightest whisper can be heard from one end of the building to the other—and for its magnificent organ, upon which recitals are given daily during the summer months for the benefit of visitors.

The wonder of the enclosure, however, is the Temple, built of white granite and upon which a sum of £800,000 was expended. Like the Tabernacle it was designed by Brigham Young. At either end of the structure are three graceful towers rising over

200 feet into space. Between them is the main edifice suggesting at a distance a vast intermediary nave. It is the only building in the city where Gentiles are not allowed to enter. True, before it was dedicated, the general public were permitted to inspect its various apartments, which has been the rule with all the temples the "Mormons" have built, some seven in all. Some day they may erect a temple in London, for it is now proposed to make London their European headquarters.

These temples are reserved for those ordinances peculiar to the sect, such as celestial marriages, baptisms for the dead, etc. "Mormons" believe that if they are wedded in the Temple it is for eternity; but such ceremonies in their ordinary churches are for this life only. Recommendation for celestial unions rests with the bishops, but what exactly are the qualifications required I do not know. Another of their beliefs is that they can be baptized for deceased relatives, and the ordinances performed for the dead last year in the Salt Lake City Temple numbered about a million. In fact, it is the chief work performed in the "Mormon" temples to-day.

What the "Mormons" have done is to resuscitate the old Hebrew idea of worship, with its Priesthood and temple, with its holies of holies into which only the select may enter; while they also observe the old Hebrew law by which a member pays a tithe, or one-tenth of his income, as a free-will offering for the support of the Church. I should imagine that for its numbers the "Mormon" Church must be the wealthiest in the world, and also very efficiently organized.

The administration offices of the Church remind one of some modern banking institution. It is a four-story granite edifice of pure Greek architecture, fronted with a colonnade of lofty pillars. I spent many hours in this building, chatting with various officials and inspecting the books in the library. Everyone was most courteous, and even to what may be termed pertinent questions there was a ready and frank response. In fact, there was no attempt to hide anything.

Just above the Church Offices is the Lion House, a narrow, two-story edifice stretching back several hundred feet, of colonial design. On either floor stretches a long corridor opening into rooms which were used by Brigham Young's wives, each having her own bedroom and sitting-room. I was pointed out the room in which he died, and in the Church offices I met a delightful little lady, cultured and refined, Mrs. Susa Gates, a daughter of Brigham Young, the first of his children to be born in the Lion House. She told me that her father was credited with having nineteen wives and fifty-six children, but it was a happy, jolly household. She assured me that these plural marriages of the old saints were by no means lightly undertaken and were always attended with much prayer and preparation. When I jokingly remarked that I found one wife sufficient, she laughingly rejoined, "That is what my husband says about me."

Everywhere in Salt Lake City I found the "Mormon" and non-"Mormon" population working amiably together, the friendliest of feelings existing between them. Indeed, that is the one amazing fact that strikes the visitor—the impossibility of recognizing one from the other. As you wander about the city noting its inhabitants at work and at play, in their homes and at

their devotions, you begin to appreciate the sterling qualities of this once-despised sect, and conclude there is no earthly reason now why they should be singled out for their religious convictions more than the members of any other denomination.—Published in *Birmingham Weekly Post*, May 20th, 1933.

## BRISTOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE

THE largest crowd that ever assembled for a semi-annual conference in the Bristol District gathered at the Corn Hall in Cirencester, Sunday, May 21st. The keynote of "joy" which made up the theme for the day, appropriately permeated the three sessions of the conference.

After the customary preliminary programme was conducted at the morning session, the congregation separated for class instruction. Sister Rintha P. Douglas and Sister Elizabeth T. Wallis received splendid reports on the district auxiliary work, and President James H. Douglas and Patriarch James H. Wallis received reports of the Priesthood activities and gave invaluable instructions and counsel to the assembled brethren.

The afternoon session marked a climax to the campaign of "joy" which had been staged throughout the Bristol District, and especially in the town of Cirencester. A splendid crowd of members and friends heard the "joy" of "Mormonism" explained from many different angles by local brethren and travelling missionaries. President Russell S. Ellsworth reported the following activities had been carried on during the past six months by the missionaries of the Bristol District, in their endeavour to spread the great philosophy of "joy." Eight thousand four hundred and forty-four hours were spent in active missionary work. Of this 1,061 hours were spent in tracting, during which time 58,604 tracts, 1,037 pamphlets and 30 copies of the Book of Mormon were placed in the hands of those interested in their joyful message. He also reported that even though there had been no addition through baptism during the past six months, there were at present several applicants for that ordinance.

A record-breaking crowd was in attendance at the evening session to hear the mission leaders discourse upon the glorious truths of "Mormonism." Sister Wallis and Sister Douglas interestingly presented some of their personal experiences which had given them a burning testimony to the divinity of the work which they were representing. Patriarch Wallis then delivered an illuminating discourse on the "Fruits of 'Mormonism,'" which was well received and did much to allay the scepticism which was prevalent among many of the new friends. President James H. Douglas dwelt upon the "Articles of Faith," which he explained with great clarity to the interest of the large crowd. He concluded his remarks with a strong testimony of Joseph Smith.

A splendid spirit was present during the whole day, and many new friends became interested in the philosophy of "joy." Musical numbers by members of the Bristol Branch were rendered at intervals throughout the day. Although many of the members were called upon to travel great distances to be present at the conference, all were repaid for their attendance. A small

handful of saints attended from the Plymouth Branch for the first time in many years, and even though they were called upon to travel most of the night, they expressed their happiness in the privilege of being present.

The conference was under the direction of President James H. Douglas of the British Mission, and the auxiliary meetings and their activities were directed by Sister Rinthia Pratt Douglas, consulting supervisor of auxiliaries and president of the British Mission Relief Societies. There were in attendance also Patriarch James H. Wallis and Sister Elizabeth T. Wallis of the European Mission Office; Elder John B. Stagg of the British Mission Office; President Russell S. Ellsworth and travelling missionaries, W. Fletcher Llewellyn, Joseph H. Chapman and Dell R. Holbrook of the Bristol District; and Elders Elliot D. Ward and Thomas S. Harris of the Birmingham District.

W. FLETCHER LEWELLYN, Clerk of Conference.

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## FROM THE MISSION FIELD

**Branch Conferences:** Of the Birkenhead Branch, Liverpool District, April 23rd. "Modern Scriptures" were capably explained by the local brethren.

Of the Nelson Branch, Liverpool District, April 30th. The Sunday School children presented a skit, demonstrating the value of keeping the "Ten Commandments."

Of the Pontefract Branch, Sheffield District, May 14th. The theme of "Mother" was appropriately depicted in two well-attended sessions.

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**Doings in the Districts:** *Manchester*—"Truvox" (Brother Albert Woodruff), the local gramophone critic, entertained the members of the Hyde Branch at a social on May 13th. Receipts were assigned to the Branch Sunday School fund.

*Scottish*—Over one hundred members and friends of the Airdrie Branch participated in a social, May 10th. The programme consisted mainly of singing and recitations, followed by light refreshments.

*Sheffield*—Primaries of the various branches of the district united to hold a Mothers' Day programme May 15th, in the Sheffield chapel, which was decorated for the occasion in the colours of spring.

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## DEATH

PLATT—Sister May Ellen Platt, a devoted worker in the Oldham Branch, Manchester District, passed away April 9th, after a long illness. Funeral services were conducted by President Barrett Fred Pulham and Elder Alma J. Larkin, Jr.

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